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MEDIA RELEASE

Prison system wins Asia Pacific smartcard award

A prestigious award for an innovative smartcard scheme, pioneered in a prison environment in Western Australia, has been won by AIMS Corporation together with technology partner Consolidated Computer Systems (CCS).

The 2003 award for Excellence in Design and Innovation was presented by the Asia Pacific Smartcard Forum at a gala dinner at Melbourne's Crown Hotel, as part of the Asia Pacific Smartcard Conference & Exhibition.

AIMS Corporation Managing Director John Cooper said that use of this multi-application technology in a prison environment was a first for Australia.

He said: "These innovations are all about teaching life skills, of increasing the level of autonomy in daily routines, in order to create a more normal environment within the secure prison walls. These life skills allow cardholders to have more control of daily tasks now, and hopefully be better equipped to reintegrate into society later."

"The idea is to improve the quality of daily life, and to return prisoners to the community equipped with the skills to cope in a modern world," said Mr Cooper.

The award-winning scheme provides a wide range of functions including access and movement control, EFT transfers via ATMs, identity validation, canteen and vending machine purchase, job application and information access via kiosks.

Mr Cooper stressed that the innovative multi-functional system had wider application in other areas of society.

"The fact that the system has been introduced into the toughest of environments, such as a prison, has been a good testing ground for us before moving into other business areas such as education and health," he said.

"The system is strongly interoperable – able to integrate with a wide range of hardware and existing applications. The flexibility of the system means that it can operate in many different environments," he said.

Mr Cooper paid tribute to the Western Australian Department of Justice as owner of Acacia Prison which AIMS Corporation operates. Mr Cooper said that the Department had long recognised the pro-social advantages of using technology to assist in the daily operation of a large prison such as Acacia.

Other contenders for the industry award won by AIMS Corporation and CCS included the high profile Hong Kong citizen ID system.

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Further contact: John Cooper on 0418 190 384

[Background Information follows]

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There are over 100 prisons in Australia however only one, Acacia Prison in Western Australia operated by AIMS Corporation, has a fully functional Smartcard system. This 1000+ person self contained community environment is managed by the integrated Smartcard system to provide security, education, programs, industries and food services.

AIMS Corporation (AIMS) and Consolidated Computer Services (CCS) formed a strategic alliance to develop innovative Smartcard systems in a coordinated and integrated manner in a range of environments.

The Smartcard implementation combines AIMS operational philosophy and contemporary international experience in correctional design and management with CCS information technology analysis, design, development and project management skills.

The benefit in implementing the Smartcard technology, to the 750-bed medium security prison is to create a normalised environment that is safe and humane.

The normalised environment enhances the care and well being of prisoners without compromising security. By providing all prisoners and staff with an individually personalised Smartcard the following areas are authenticated:

- ❑ Movement and monitoring of cardholders throughout the facility
- ❑ Controlled trust account transfers and enquiries
- ❑ Canteen and vending machine purchases, and
- ❑ Information access via kiosks

Management of prisoners is fundamental to the efficient daily operation, and is supported by the availability of varying amenity levels, and incentives to move from basic accommodation to self-care facilities through achievement of behavioural standards. These standards are monitored and reported by the Smartcard system.

The implementation uses Smartcard and computer based systems that work together to produce a holistic management tool for the site, comprehensively managing all cardholder activity from macro to micro levels.

In late 2002 a CCS developed authentication module was commissioned which has now issued approximately 4,000 cards and authenticated in excess of 2 million transactions.

Integrated Smartcard functionality at Acacia Prison currently includes:

- A Smartcard issuance scheme including priming, photo ID production, reporting, reconciliation and hot listing
- Permission based movement and equipment issue via Smartcard identity authentication
- 24 touch screen Information Kiosk / ATMs for purchasing, and EFT secured by Smartcard and PIN number
- Food and Beverage Vending via Smartcard e-purse
- Smartcard Remote Authentication Module providing validation of card enrolment, processing of credit and debit requests, and a complete audit trail

Most importantly the AIMS and CCS alliance has been able to create a new Smartcard segment in Australia, generating overseas interest.

Use of this technology teaches life skills, which increase the prisoners' level of autonomy and removes a range of institutional behaviours, assisting in the development of a sense of worth and self esteem. These life-skills allow the cardholders to have more control of daily tasks now, and be better equipped to reintegrate into society later.

This new segment has moved Smartcards out of the corporate environment and into daily routine.

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